

Sacramento River Conservation Area Funding Proposal for the AFRP

Scope of Services

Background

Passed by the State Legislature in 1986, Senate Bill 1086 called for a management plan for the Sacramento River and its tributaries that would protect, restore, and enhance both fisheries and riparian habitat. The bill established an Advisory Council composed of representatives from State and federal agencies, county supervisors, landowners, water contractors, commercial and sport fisheries, and general wildlife and conservation interests. The Upper Sacramento River Fisheries and Riparian Habitat Management Plan (1989 Plan) included a specific and action-oriented fisheries plan and a more conceptual riparian habitat plan. Many of the fisheries items have since been or are currently being implemented.

Today, the Advisory Council's Riparian Habitat Committee is working toward on-the-ground implementation of the riparian plan along the Sacramento River. The goal is to create a continuous riparian ecosystem between Keswick Dam, in Shasta County, and Colusa. Along leveed portions of the river below Colusa, the goal is to create a continuous corridor of vegetation. Implementation of the riparian plan is consistent with the Anadromous Fish Restoration Plan (AFRP) upper mainstem Sacramento River Action Item #9 as well as Evaluation Items #1, 3, and 5, which are all ranked as high priority, and Evaluation Item #5, which is ranked as a medium priority. Additionally, implementation of the riparian plan is consistent with the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) Section 3406(b)(1)(A) which requires that the program give first priority to measures which protect and restore natural channel and riparian habitat values through habitat restoration actions. A central implementation feature is the Inner River Zone (IRZ), an area of limited river meander. The IRZ contains the most flood and erosion-prone areas along the river. Restoring it to an actively meandering ecosystem will benefit anadromous fish through gravel recruitment, increasing the quantity and quality of shaded riverine aquatic habitat, increasing in-stream habitat diversity, moderating temperatures, and enhancing nutrient input. All of the AFRP target species, including the four races of chinook salmon, steelhead, striped bass, American Shad, and white and green sturgeon, will directly benefit from this project. If all landowners within the potential IRZ choose to participate, the area would include 30,000 - 40,000 acres between Red Bluff and Colusa.

The Committee developed the *Sacramento River Conservation Area Handbook* to guide an implementation program for riparian habitat management along the Sacramento River. The *Handbook* addresses both the dynamics of riparian ecosystems as well as the realities of the local agricultural and landowner issues. It has done this by developing a set of guiding principles and planning tools that should direct riparian habitat management along the river. Recommended actions include the

formation of a largely local-based non-profit organization (NPO), the Sacramento River Conservation Association, to coordinate voluntary restoration efforts within a 213,000-acre Sacramento River Conservation Area. This entity would be governed by a board of directors, which would include both private landowner and public interest representatives from each of the involved counties as well as ex-officio members from six state and federal resource agencies. A Technical Team composed of scientists from relevant disciplines would be established to advise the NPO on issues related to river management and site-specific planning. Team members could include agency and academic scientists as well as private individuals. The efforts of the Association would be supported by various agencies and organizations along the Sacramento River through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

An important component of the program is site-specific planning. A site-specific plan should outline the current condition of the particular sub-reach and the potential that exists to protect and restore river processes. Consideration is given to ecological processes (flooding and channel migration), habitats (riparian forests, sloughs, gravel bars, and shaded riverine aquatic), and identified locations of sensitive sites (bank swallow colonies, yellow-billed cuckoo nests and chinook salmon spawning areas). In addition, current land use, ownership, and development infrastructure is important in determining realistic restoration projects. The plans should address issues that could affect neighboring landowners such as fire and trespass problems and any negative effects on local tax bases that might result from restoration of the site.

The Corps of Engineers is currently conducting a Hamilton City, CA Feasibility Phase Project Study Plan, in conjunction with the State Reclamation Board and Glenn County, of flood control alternatives for Hamilton City. A sub-reach study of the Hamilton City area through SB1086 would provide a comprehensive plan for habitat restoration to be incorporated into the long-term management objectives. Site-specific projects could be developed within the sub-reach to address concerns identified through the planning process.

The Woodson Bridge sub-reach is another area that provides an opportunity for site-specific planning. Erosion problems at the Woodson Bridge State Park have intensified the need for a long-term solution. The opportunity exists to facilitate river restoration as well as addressing the need to protect public facilities. With the use of sophisticated computer modeling, a better understanding of river channel migration and benefit to the natural succession of riparian habitat could be gained.

At this time a sub-reach plan at the mouth of Battle and Cottonwood Creeks is being developed through a combination CALFED grant and Packard Foundation funding to BLM. Through coordination with members of the Riparian Habitat Committee, a fee title and conservation easement acquisition project for several miles of river and creek frontage is being negotiated with local landowners. A management plan will be developed with federal, state and local agencies that will include consideration of the principles outlined in the Sacramento River Conservation Area Handbook.

Applicant:

Primary: California State University, Chico Research Foundation

In Partnership with: Department of Water Resources (DWR), Northern District
Sacramento River Conservation Association
(A non-profit entity organized to coordinate
management activities on the Sacramento River)

1 -- Scope of the Project

The scope of work includes implementation of the riparian ecosystem portion of the 1989 Plan through the development of a local non-profit entity for watershed management and planning on the Sacramento River. The goal of SB1086 is to establish and preserve a continuous riparian ecosystem along the Sacramento River, which will benefit a number of priority habitats and species. Specifically, the proposed project involves hiring a manager and office staff for a three-year period to assist in the development and implementation of site-specific plans for areas within the Sacramento River Riparian Conservation Area, and to manage a new non-profit riparian land management entity that will coordinate activities and continue the process of building broader support and understanding for the goals of the SB1086 program.

Funding from a 1998 two-year CALFED grant has provided for an existing coordinator position hired by the California State University, Chico, Research Foundation to finalize an agreement (MOA) among participating parties to establish a non-profit entity and coordinate management activities. DWR, Northern District, provides office space and administrative assistance to this position. The MOA has been finalized and is in the process of being circulated for signatures. Coordination of site-specific plans is ongoing, as is an outreach program. Articles of Incorporation and By-laws for the management entity are in the process of being drafted and it is anticipated that the organization would be established by July 1, 2000. The funding that is being requested for this project will be utilized to provide initial staffing for the newly created nonprofit management entity, which will implement the MOA, coordinate management activities, continue working with local government and landowners to resolve outstanding issues, and implement natural process and meander zone restoration, which are all key SB1086 objectives.

2 -- Benefits of the Project

Section 3406(b)(1) of the CVPIA requires that the Secretary of the Interior develop within three years of enactment and implement a program which makes all reasonable effort to ensure that, by the year 2002, natural production of anadromous fish in Central Valley rivers and streams will be sustainable, on a long-term basis, at

levels not less than twice the average levels attained during the period of 1967 - 1991. A further requirement is that first priority be given to measures which protect and restore natural channel and riparian habitat values through habitat restoration actions. Implementation of this project directly benefits each of the AFRP target species to include the four races of chinook salmon, steelhead, striped bass, American shad, and white and green sturgeon, primarily through restoration actions that restore natural channel process and habitat values. The overall goals of the SB1086 program are to *preserve remaining riparian habitat and reestablish a continuous riparian ecosystem along the Sacramento River between Redding and Chico, and reestablish riparian vegetation along the river from Chico to Verona*. One of the key principles is to use an ecosystem approach that contributes to the recovery of threatened and endangered species and is sustainable by natural processes. By encouraging natural erosion and deposition to occur within the historic river meander channel, a sustainable system is developed that provides the greatest biological and ecological benefit at the least cost.

3 -- Monitoring and Data Evaluation

Organize project review procedure that incorporates the Technical Team and Association Board.

4 -- Work to be Performed and Responsibilities

The Association will contract with the Foundation to manage project funds in accordance with the Estimated Budget (Exhibit A); keep complete and accurate accounting records in accordance with standard accounting practices; put project personnel on Foundation payroll, if applicable; and prepare all billing documents in accordance with CVPIA requirements.

5 -- Tasks to be Performed

Task 1) Office Development and Plan of Action

Association will prepare job description and advertise for Manager and Assistant of Association.

Deliverable: Select new Association manager

-- Complete within 3 months

Establish administrative procedure and organizational structure to support the Association's activities. Set up office.

Deliverable: Office staffed and operating

-- Complete within 4 months.

Review program responsibilities. Utilize Handbook and 1989 Plan.

Deliverable: Develop "Program of Work" within the goals and principles outlined in the Handbook.

-- Complete within 6 months.

Task 2) Assist in Development of Sub-reach Planning

as directed by the Association's Board of Directors, and coordinate and complete one or more site-specific plans.

Deliverable: Work with the Association, public agencies, local interests and the Technical Team to identify issues within a specific sub-reach. Facilitate the selection of specific solutions and a lead agency.

-- Coordinate sub-reach plans as directed.

Coordinate with Technical Team to accomplish site-specific plans.

Deliverable: Work with Technical Team to develop at least one site-specific plan. This plan may be related to Hamilton City, Woodson Bridge, Battle Creek/Cottonwood Creek, or other areas. This task will include resolving outstanding issues in implementing natural process and meander zone restoration issues in accordance with the Handbook and developing incentives for landowner participation.

-- Complete within one year.

Establish Project Review and Monitoring Process.

Deliverable: Facilitate Technical Team review of various project proposals. Encourage research into creating a sustainable ecosystem approach to river management. Use GIS information to provide scientific basis for river restoration and riparian habitat recruitment. Assist in preparation of annual monitoring report.

-- Ongoing

Task 3) Public Education and Outreach

Deliverable: Task includes the development of an education and outreach plan, a presentation program and a regular newsletter. Make presentations as needed.

-- Ongoing

Develop mapping and public information program.

Deliverable: Coordinate with resources entities to provide public use program. Develop area use mapping. Recruit a mutual assistance group to help reduce trespass problems.

-- Complete within two years.

Task 4) Facilitate Development of Streamlined Permitting Process

Deliverable: Work with permitting agencies to develop a coordinated permitting program within the Conservation Area.

-- Complete within three years

Task 5) Project Administration

Deliverable: The Association will contract with the Foundation to manage project funds in accordance with the Estimated Budget (Exhibit A); keep complete and accurate accounting records in accordance with standard accounting practices; put project personnel on Foundation payroll, if applicable; and prepare all billing documents in accordance with CVPIA requirements.

-- Ongoing

6 Estimated Budget

Figure 1. Cost allocations by year

Cost Allocation	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Direct Labor Hrs	7380	7380	7380
Salary & Benefits	\$89,970	\$94,469*	\$99,192*
General Admin	\$29,370	\$30,839	\$32,380
Service Contracts	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Material & Aquisitn	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Misc Direct Costs	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$10,000
Total Costs	\$161,840	\$165,308	\$171,572

*Assumes a 5% Salary increase

Manager

Job Description -- Under the direction of the Board of Directors: Develop a program of work, coordinate sub-reach and site-specific plans; Organize and facilitate Board and Technical Committee meetings; Assist landowners and public entities in assuring project coordination with the principles and goals set forth in the Sacramento River Conservation Area Handbook; Develop a public use and information program, including an Area map; Work with regulatory agencies to develop a streamlined permitting process; Manage business affairs of the non-profit entity; and, work with landowners and agencies to resolve outstanding issues related to the restoration of the Sacramento River Ecosystem.

Total salary and benefits \$60,000

Assistant

Job Description -- Oversee office operation and provide assistance to manager in fulfilling his/her duties. Ability to make educational presentations and represent Association at meetings would be required. Secretarial, bookkeeping, and contract writing skills needed.

Total salary and benefits \$30,000

Figure 2. Example of staff time allocation by task in cost categories.

Project Task Year 1	Labor Hours & Benefits	Direct Salary	General Admin Fee	Service Contract Costs	Material Costs	Misc. & other Costs	Total Costs
Task 1							
Staff Set-up				\$10,000	\$13,500	\$1,500	\$25,000
Manager	200	\$5,768	\$1,929				\$7,697
Assistant	400	\$5,768	\$1,789				\$7,557
Task 2							\$40,255
Action plan & Project Review						\$1,500	\$1,500
Manager	740	\$21,342	\$7,139				\$28,481
Assistant	420	\$6,056	\$1,879				\$7,935
Task 3							\$37,916
Public Ed. & Outreach				\$10,000	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$13,000
Manager	560	\$16,139	\$5,403				\$21,542
Assistant	500	\$7,210	\$2,237				\$9,447
Task 4							\$43,988
Permit Process						\$1,500	\$1,500
Manager	400	\$11,536	\$3,859				\$15,395
Assistant	480	\$6,922	\$2,147				\$9,069
Task 5							\$25,964
Admin							
Manager	180	\$5,191	\$1,737			\$1,500	\$8,428
Assistant	280	\$4,038	\$1,252				\$5,290
		\$89,970	\$29,370	\$20,000	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$13,718
TOTAL	7380						\$161,840